

It's Not Exact But That's Love. by theweakestthing

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Anal Sex, Blow Jobs, Don't copy to another site, M/M, Not Beta Read, Period-Typical Homophobia, i tripped and fell in love with these boys

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Max (Stranger Things), Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Jonathan Byers/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-11-11

Updated: 2017-11-11

Packaged: 2022-04-02 14:47:20

Rating: Mature

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings, No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 6,857

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

"You make me want to enjoy my life again."

It's Not Exact But That's Love.

Author's Note:

- Translation into 中文-普通话 國語 available: [It's Not Exact But That's Love. \(中译\)](#) by [bde3ybde3y](#)

Jonathan caught sight of the bat in the trunk of Steve's car as they'd pulled out the spare to change a tire on the side of the road, he ran his eyes over nails that protruded from it. There was what Jonathan could only assume was dried blood and viscera from the things that tormented them more than nearly two years ago upon it.

"You know, I made this and you're the one that get's all the glory," Jonathan murmured, he wasn't stupid enough to pull the gnarled thing out in board daylight, it was pretty darn obvious what he was talking about anyways, "you always seem to get the glory," he added, a little bitter.

He'd long since gotten over their past, Steve had more than made up for it with sickeningly genuine apologies, he actually spoke to Jonathan like he was a real person and he'd brought Jonathan a brand new camera, which he'd only found out through Nancy's meddling. She'd been the real reason they'd ended up together, first friends and then whatever they were now. They knew what they meant to each other they just hadn't put a label to it yet.

Nancy had been the glue that stuck them together, not so subtly leaving them alone in the school's dark room just so Steve could apologise for what Jonathan remembered as either the third or fourth time. Jonathan had said something to the effect of 'if you don't shut up I'm gonna shove this film down your throat' and instead of being offended Steve had laughed. It'd been the most he'd really said to the other ever. After that things had been easier, well until Nancy and he had hooked up, but apparently nothing could really phase Steve anymore and they'd all remained friends. Then the relationships had shifted, he and Nancy had grown apart and he and Steve had grown closer, it was kind of funny how they'd come around to each other.

"That didn't exactly last long did it?" Steve replied, crouched down in

front the punctured rear wheel. "Apparently, glory's only for assholes," he added as he sent a sort of sarcastic look up at Jonathan, Jonathan himself wasn't really sure.

Before his eyes, Jonathan had watched a tiger change its stripes. Steve had changed or Jonathan had actually gotten to know the other, he'd never know for sure, but Steve was forever apologetic, kind-hearted and owned up to his mistakes and most importantly Steve was impossibly charming. It was something that Jonathan couldn't forget, despite himself he'd fallen for that earnest charm.

"You gonna just stand there and watch your pretty boyfriend struggle or are you gonna come over here and help me?" Steve asked, brows furrowed as he squinted up at Jonathan.

"Boyfriend?" Jonathan said incredulously.

"Whatever, just get over here," Steve called as he waved the other over with his hand.

"Okay, boyfriend," Jonathan teased, Steve only sighed in reply as he crouched down beside the other.

"You don't have to mock me," Steve muttered, almost scowling as he loosened the nuts on the tire.

"I'm not mocking you, it's nice," Jonathan said, he pushed Steve lightly on the shoulder, "I've got a boyfriend now, huh?" He added, smirking at the other, he held the spare tire in hand between his legs.

"Don't push it Byers or you won't have one for long," Steve warned, he pushed Jonathan back, smiling wide and daring.

Jonathan loved that smile, had shied away from it when they'd first really started to get to know each other. At first he didn't really have the time to get to know him, he'd been too caught up in Will being back, then it'd all been really quite awkward after he and Nancy had gotten together along with things happening to Will again, Steve had been weirdly cool through it all though. It took a while, but Steve wormed his way into Jonathan's life until he couldn't image it without the other there.

He wasn't shying away anymore, he was sending his smile own back.

The bottle didn't shatter on impact with the wall, but it did when it hit the floor. Steve was stood beside Jonathan when the other threw it, there wasn't any previous indication that the outburst would happen. Steve didn't flinch though, he'd been expecting something with the way Jonathan had been wound so tight, when the other snapped it wasn't any kind of surprise.

"Hey she broke up with me too, maybe we can start a club," Steve said, he smiled at Jonathan, "should get jackets made," he added, throwing jokes out at Jonathan's stonewall face.

"I can't believe how well you took that," Jonathan said, the memory of them all stumbling upon each other in the darkness came to mind, it'd been kind of dumb how he and Nancy had both been surprised to see Steve, weird shit seemed to stick to all of them and dragged them into it kick and screaming without much care for what they wanted.

"I'm a chill kind of guy," Steve shrugged hands in his pockets, "I also kind of had more important things to think about at the time, we all did," he added.

"Yeah," Jonathan breathed, he ran his fingers through his hair and stared at the mess he'd made on the concrete. "I'm an idiot," he groaned.

"I wasn't gonna say anything, but yeah," Steve said, he shrugged again with his palm held out skyward.

"Shut up Harrington," Jonathan groaned, almost but not quite glaring at the other.

"You know that's never happening," Steve returned and Jonathan groaned again, which made Steve laugh.

"I should apologise," Jonathan said after another moment of staring at the ground, tiny shards of glass were scattered against the wall and splayed out toward his feet.

He and Nancy had started arguing outside the theatre, they'd been

growing distant lately, spending more time apart than together and when they were together it didn't really feel like it, they'd both been feeling it for a while now. It had bubbled up until Jonathan felt like he was boiling and he'd snapped at Nancy on their way back to her car.

Steve had just happened to pass by at the same moment that Nancy had yelled that 'it's so over between us' before storming off, leaving Jonathan to stand in the small parking lot alone and embarrassed. He and Steve had shared a look that drew out for a long awkward moment, Steve had broken the silence and asked if Jonathan wanted a bottle of coke. They'd walked off to the nearby 7-Eleven, Steve had chatted away the entire time as Jonathan trailed behind the other brooding quietly, staring holes into the concrete. Steve had taken the initiative to take Jonathan somewhere more secluded where Jonathan was more likely to actually talk to him. They'd slipped into the alleyway and that was when Jonathan had launched his drained bottle at the wall.

"Yeah," Steve drew out, hands on his hips.

"What should I apologise for?" Jonathan winced, he knew it was bad but it wasn't exactly a clear thing, it wasn't like either of them had done anything wrong, he just felt raw and didn't want to lose Nancy's friendship over this. He looked over at Steve sheepishly from under his fringe.

"Being a dickhead?" Steve offered and Jonathan sighed.

"Why does everything end up falling apart," Jonathan muttered under his breath, he pushed his hair out of his face and tried to figure out how exactly he was going to apologise to Nancy, should he go to her house or call her? He definitely had to patch things up before they went back to school on Monday.

"Don't worry about it man," Steve said, he patted Jonathan on the shoulder, "it'll work out," he added, Jonathan could tell that he really thought it would too. What Jonathan would give to feel like that for once in his life.

Steve's words were solid, something to hold onto, and Jonathan could

breathe a little easier at the sound of them. Jonathan had thought of it as something of a super power, it wasn't so out of the realm of possibility, Jane, previously Eleven, had powers and apparently there were more of them out there. Steve's super power was changing the mood, he'd seen the other turn a room full of agitated just teens calm and even had them laughing at Steve's lame jokes in less than ten minutes. Even Jonathan wasn't immune to it, he often found himself falling for it too.

"Don't tell anyone, but sometimes you can be pretty cool Harrington," Jonathan said, looking up at the other from under his lashes and ruffled fringe.

"Yeah well, I'm just looking out for my friend," Steve said, hand heavy on Jonathan's shoulder. The touch felt like an anchor to Jonathan.

"Get the fuck out of the tub Steve!" Jonathan groaned, it was a special groan reserved only for when Steve was being irritating and kind of charming at the same time, as only Steve Harrington could.

Steve had slipped into the tub before Jonathan was able to even jump out his jeans, he'd been looking forward to this bath all day and it wasn't like he'd didn't usually enjoy sharing a bath or a shower with his boyfriend, thing were just different that day. He was so bone achingly tired from carrying around the camera equipment all day, he just wanted to lay in the hot soapy water with his eyes closed for twenty minutes. Alone, the most important part was alone.

"I thought you wanted a nice relaxing bath," Steve smiled, wet hair smoothed back away from his face. Even if Jonathan was irritated, he couldn't stop his eyes from roving over the other's frame, he pulled his eyes from the other stared at his reflection instead.

"That doesn't include you," Jonathan sighed, shoulders slumped where he stood semi-naked by the sink.

"C'mon Jonny, I'll help ya relax," Steve said, voice cloying as he curled a finger, beckoning the other.

"I really do just need to relax," Jonathan said, imploring as he stared at the other, ankles crossed where they stuck out of the tub.

"No funny business, I get it," Steve said, he held his hands up. He slipped his legs back into the tub and made room for Jonathan. The water sloshed back and forth from the motion and Jonathan's resolve faded.

He peeled out of his clothes and sighed one last time as he sunk into the steaming water, he could just feel his muscles unknotting and the heat seeped into him. Fingers curled around his shoulders and thumbs dug into his shoulder blades. He was slowly melting from Steve's touch and the cloying warmth of the water, Jonathan knew it was dangerous and ever since he'd seen *A Nightmare On Elm Street* he'd been afraid of falling asleep in the tub, but right then he was just dancing on the edge of slumber.

"No funny business, remember," Jonathan murmured as he leaned back into Steve's touch.

"Yeah, yeah, it actually is just a massage this time," Steve assured as he continued to work on the other's shoulders.

Maybe it was a good thing that Steve was stubborn and attention seeking, otherwise Jonathan might have passed out in the water, he was just about ready to hit the hay already. He'd been in the bath for less than five minutes and wasn't really any cleaner than he had been when he'd gotten in, it was a little frustrating but Jonathan couldn't find the strength in him to care all that much about it.

Steve's fingers moved from Jonathan's shoulders and slowly lowered him down into the water, wetting his hair. Jonathan stared up at Steve from sort of in the other's lap, watched Steve smile softly down at him. His eyes fluttered closed at the feeling of fingernails against his scalp, fingers moved in circular motions on his head and Jonathan found himself slipping away with the gentle rhythm.

He woke up some time later in bed fearing that he could be drowning, eyes flung wide open and heart pounding like a jackhammer against his chest. He'd slowly come back to himself after realising that he wasn't actually drowning and dropped himself back

onto the sheets, hair still damp against the mattress. It was a little embarrassing to think that Steve had carried him from the bathtub to the bed, still he was thankful that Steve was so reliable in that regard.

He pressed his face into the pillow and fell into sleep this time, not water nor Steve's hands.

Back arched sharply off the bed, Steve bit his lip hard, trying desperately not to let the throaty groan that banged against the back of his teeth out of his mouth. Jonathan was so much more gentle than Steve had expected. The other had taken the time and care to make sure that Steve wasn't hurt, opening him slow and steady. Jonathan had actually done his research, reading medical books in the school library and making notes when no one was looking, Steve wasn't quite sure if he found that endearing or creepy but at least it showed that Jonathan cared.

He'd brought the lube and condoms himself, on Jonathan's request, Steve could just imagine Jonathan's beet red face as the younger tried to buy the items. Jonathan would have died from the embarrassment or at least passed out. Steve had gone down to the drug store pretending to be cocky and about to get lucky with some random girl. He'd brought condoms before, from that very drug store, it wasn't exactly a big deal to him at that point, but the lube was a new addition. Underneath the confident veneer Steve was shaking with excitement and fear. Jonathan had startled him by bringing it up first, Steve swore that if he hadn't have been sitting at the time he'd have hit the floor at the other's words.

Just like any other teenagers, they'd had to plan when, where and how they were going to do it. Steve's place was the obvious where, his parents weren't around much so all they really had to do was wait until they were next out of town, which wasn't that long at all really.

When Jonathan came over to his house that night, Steve pulled the other in by the collar, he'd kicked the door closed behind them as he'd dragged Jonathan further into the house. Their lips collided like rocks, mouths pressed so hard together that they could feel each other's teeth through their lips. His hand slipped from Jonathan's

shirt, up to the back of the other's neck and into his hair. Jonathan's hands were incessant upon him, uncertain where to touch and where to stay as Steve led them backward through the house until they'd found their way into his bed.

Jonathan's slow movements were driving him up the damn wall, Steve was sure he was going to split his lip open if it went on like this for much longer. The other panted above him, breaths huffed against his neck, ghosted over the flush of his throat and made him release a full body shiver. One hand twisted in the sheets beside his head and the other tangled in Jonathan's hair.

Part of him desperately wanted Jonathan to go faster, but his pride was telling him to keep his damn mouth shut. It wasn't like Jonathan hadn't heard him moaning before, but it also wasn't like they spoke much during those times either. They'd gone down on each other and had their hands all of each other, but there was just something about having Jonathan buried deep inside him that left him feeling vulnerable.

Instead of using his mouth, for once, Steve used his body and canted his hips against Jonathan. The motion had Jonathan gasping, stuttered breaths along Steve's jaw line. He kept it up, took some of the control for himself, he wrapped his arms around Jonathan's broad shoulders and locked his ankles against the small of his back, he watched as the other's eyes shuttered.

Pulling pleasure from places he'd never thought of before. Steve groaned, forehead pressed against Jonathan's and their raucous breaths mingled between them. Their flushed and sweat slicked bodies rocked together, Jonathan ran his hand up Steve's thigh and bent his leg further, pressing his knee to his chest. He reached down between them, wrapped his fingers around himself and began to pump as Jonathan picked up the pace.

He felt Jonathan cum, felt the other shudder against him, a dry groan forced out directly into his ear. Steve came with thin lips pressed to the column of his neck, grunted breaths against his pulse, he hissed and gasped in turn as it streamed out of him.

They both hissed and winced as Jonathan slowly pulled out of him,

Steve slumped back down upon the mattress and wiped himself clean with a few kleenex from the bedside table as he watched the other leave the room. His chest rose and fell shallowly as he kept his eyes on the open doorway. Timidly, Steve had tried to sit up, arms shaky as he held himself up and scanned what he could see of his room for his boxer shorts.

"Nice hair Harrington," Jonathan commented as he re-entered the room, he ducked down to retrieve his clothes where they were scattered across the floor.

Steve shuffled off the edge of the bed and bent down to pluck his boxers from the floor, he caught sight of himself in his mirror as he bent forward. To say that his hair was a mess would have been quite the understatement. Steve blinked at his wild reflection, hair tangled and matted, it pointed out in several directions, his lips were faintly bruised, there were also a few livid marks on his skin that Steve didn't quite remember receiving.

"The look's called hot mess Byers," Steve said as he pulled his boxers on.

"Sure, you're a hot mess," Jonathan replied, t-shirt already over his head, he pulled it down his torso as he stared back at the other.

Steve climbed back up the bed beside the other, Jonathan shimmied his underwear on and sunk down on the mattress next to him. He lent over Jonathan and pressed a chaste kiss to the other's lips as he switched the lamp off. They laid side by side, hands grasped and fingers laced between them.

Steve had hoped that he'd never have to use that bat again, had so desperately wished to forget its weight in his hand, but there he was slightly crouched in the darkness with the bat in held by his side. He didn't know what a bat was supposed to do against an inter-dimensional 'ghost', but these things weren't an exact science and wasn't like he'd ever actually understand it all anyways. A flash of something that looked human shaped flitted in front of their flash light beams, the sudden movement yanked Steve from his thoughts. Dustin wasn't supposed to leave his side, but the idiot had gone

running off at the sight of a supposedly possessed Max and of course he had to go chasing after the younger.

"She's being possessed from the other side," Jane had murmured as she stared out into the night earlier at the Byers', "she could bring something over if we don't get it out soon."

Steve hadn't gotten the chance to ask what the other side of what Max was being possessed from was, did Jane mean the afterlife or just another twisted dimension, Steve guessed he'd never know because that was the exact moment that some kind of scaly bat the size of a large dog crashed through the living room window. Surely the Byers residence had taken more than enough of a beating over the years, Steve lamented as shards of glass skittered across the floor. Jonathan had taken one of the kitchen chairs to the thing and kept hitting it until it stopped moving.

Steve kept the beam of his flash light on Dustin's back and called for the other, Dustin's flash light swayed on Max's form ahead of them. The light glared off of the girl's ginger hair.

"Use the fucking walkie Henderson!" Steve yelled, he caught up with the other shortly after, he gripped Dustin's jacket in his fist and pulled the kid along.

Dustin adjusted his headset as they continued to follow Max through the woods, he switched the walkie-talkie on where it was attached to his hip. They both winced at the sound of the feedback, but it soon faded out and Dustin began calling out to the others.

"Guys, we've found her, we've found Max," Dustin said frantically into the microphone.

Steve could kind of make out the conversation through Dustin's headphones, voices crackled through the small speakers. They stumbled and staggered in the darkness of the woods, but still they kept their beams on Max, tried their best not to lose sight of her again.

"She's heading for the quarry," Dustin informed, free hand held to the top of his head to keep the headset and his hat on as they ran. "Nancy

says we have to cut her off before she makes it there," he said to Steve after a moment or two of barely audible voices speaking desperately into Dustin's ear.

"Well that'll be hard," Steve muttered, eyes still on Max about ten feet ahead of them, "since when can a thirteen year old run that fast?" He added bitterly.

"The others are going to flank, it'll be a pincer attack," Dustin said and Steve nodded.

They just got to the edge of the forest when Lucas came from their right and tackled Max to the ground. Steve and Dustin reached the two of them shortly after, Max struggled, thrashing underneath Lucas. Moments later the rest of their group came running out through the trees.

"Hold her down," Mike yelled, Jonathan was just in front of him and Will was trailing just behind.

Steve dropped the bat and flash light, grabbed Max by the shoulders and tried his best to hold the kid against the ground. She struggled with inhuman power and even with himself, Lucas, Dustin and now Nancy on top of the girl they were only barely keeping her down.

"Jane, do you think you can get it out of her?" Jonathan called as he approached the group.

Max's eyes were blown black and the girl was gargling like some sort of rabid animal, she thrashed dangerously hard beneath them, snarling. Steve really hoped that she wouldn't spit at him or do anything like the possessed girl in Exorcist had, he wasn't up for getting covered in fluids this time.

"I will try," Jane said as Jonathan joined the group holding Max to the muddy ground.

Mike and Will stood besides Jane as she held her hands out in front of her, this was perhaps the third or fourth time he'd seen her work her magic. It was equal parts cool and terrifying. Max began to convulse beneath them and he watched as Jane grit her teeth, feet

sinking into the wet mud.

A noise, a noise that Steve just hoped he wasn't hearing began low and grew louder. There was a rustling that turned to a rushing that came from the forest behind them, it gave Steve flashbacks that he tried to blink away.

"Mike, Will, take my place," Steve called, he let one of his hands up and reached around for his bat as the boys scurried to him.

The bat-things from earlier broke through the trees as Steve got to his feet, nail-bat in hand. He rushed past Jane and readied his stance, bat head aloft waiting for one of those things to come close enough. One fluttered toward him, ducking close and Steve swung his bat, lips pressed into a hard thin line as he used all the force he could to knock it out of the air.

Dustin groaned behind him and Steve looked back to see Max kick the boy in the gut, even with six bodies upon the girl, Max was almost breaking free.

"How much longer Jane?" Mike asked, he had one of his knees on Max's chest and the other on her arm, he was almost breathless, sweat dripped from his brow.

"Soon," Jane murmured, brows furrowed as she focused her energy on Max.

"I don't wanna rush ya kiddo, but we don't got a lot of time," Steve said, eyes above them as the bat like things began to circle them. He swung his bat in the air whenever one of them threatened to get closer, but they were slowly growing bolder. One dive bombed him and Steve was just fast enough to catch it, the nails sunk into its flesh and he had to put his foot on its corpse to pull the bat free.

Then he was knocked from his feet, the world turned, lurched, and before he knew it Steve was out cold. He was supposed to be on break, he was supposed to be having a great Thanksgiving at the Byers, since his parents were away on business, again. He was supposed to be eating turkey, making Jonathan groan and Will laugh as Joyce smiled softly. Of course things couldn't be like they were

supposed to, not in this town and not for him and his friends he thought bitterly.

When he opened his eyes Jonathan was looming above him, how was it that he always ended up getting his ass handed to him, Steve figured that he was just lucky like that. Somehow he was laid out on the kitchen floor back at the Byers', he supposed that Jonathan had carried him or more aptly had struggled to carry him back there.

"Boy you're a sight for sore eyes Byers," Steve said groggily, his vision was blurred at the edges and he tried to think around what he figured was a mild concussion.

Jonathan laughed, eyes crinkled as he looked down at Steve, "good to know you're alive dumbass," he said as he lightly punched Steve's chest.

Steve slid his eyes around the room, Max was out cold on the couch, head in Jane's lap, Nancy and the kids were clearing up the mess and Joyce was stapling a trash bag over the broken window. Jonathan slowly helped him up onto his feet. He swayed where he stood, leant heavily against the other, he groaned into Jonathan's shoulder at the pulsing pain.

"We need to get our stories straight before we take the both of you to the hospital," Hopper's voice boomed from behind him.

"I fell over in the woods while horsing around with the kids," Steve said with conviction, as much conviction as he could while his tongue felt like a foreign object in his mouth.

"Atta boy Harrington," Hopper said, clapping him on the shoulder, the motion made Steve's stomach lurch.

It was just another shitty Autumn night in Hawkins, but at least they were all here, at least they were all safe. Steve figured that he could handle getting his ass beat as long as they all came out alive at the other end.

The street lamp rained light down over the car, Steve caught sight of

himself in the rear-view mirror and winced. His lip was spilt, there was dried blood on his upper lip from his nose and more on his right eyebrow, he could just feel the black eye coming on. Maybe it wasn't the best thing to get into yet another fight with Billy. Steve had, for the most part, tried to avoid the other and Billy had let him after the events of that night at the Byers', but this had been somewhat unavoidable.

For the most part Steve wasn't the type that was easy to get a rise out of, but there were some things that just set him off. One of those things was something he himself had said before, whenever he heard anything drop like venom about the Byers guilt churned awfully in his stomach, he wasn't sure he could have stopped himself even if he'd wanted to.

"You look like shit Harrington," Jonathan muttered from the driver's seat, his eyes sharp glared over at Steve, "they're gonna start calling you a faggot now too," he added, hands curled around the stirring wheel so tight that it turned his knuckles white.

"Like I give a shit what they call me," Steve returned.

He was supposed to be getting out of the car and heading inside his house, but Steve just sat there staring out the window at his dark home. Home, Steve wasn't sure that he knew the meaning of the word, that building was more of a husk that he and his parents occasionally existed inside.

"Nancy will chew you out as well," Jonathan said in his dad voice, the one he used on Will from time to time.

"Yeah, I'm sure she will, she's sensible like that," Steve muttered, he dropped his head back against the head rest and watched Jonathan stare at him.

Jonathan blinked, eyelashes fluttering slow like butterfly wings, but the eyes behind them were sharp and analytical. That gaze often had Steve wondering what exactly was going through Jonathan's head. The other wasn't the most talkative person in the world, most of the time he spoke he was telling Steve to shut up, so most of the time he was left wondering.

"What?" Jonathan muttered, he turned his eyes away from Steve and back to the road before them.

The way the light from the street lamp cascaded down on Jonathan's profile was stunning, it cut the other in sharp lines and the sight left Steve thinking of paintings he'd seen in textbooks. He trailed his eyes along the jut of Jonathan's jaw and found himself leaning forward, slipping into the other's personal space.

"Can I kiss you?" Steve found himself asking, the words were fast out of him and he didn't have any time to think twice about it.

"What?" Jonathan turned his head swiftly back toward Steve, eyes wide and blinking rapidly.

"Did I stutter Byers or do you just want to hear me say it again?" Steve said, throwing caution to the wind and doubling down on his statement.

"I do not need to hear it again," Jonathan said, eyebrows raised high as he ran his hand through his hair.

"Okay, then I'll go," Steve said, hand on the door handle, the rejection was expected but of course it still stung, as he was about to leave a fist in his jacket stopped him and pulled him back into Jonathan's space.

Then their lips were pressed together, slotted over each other, Jonathan's breath tickled the top of his lip as they stayed like that for a moment. Jonathan let him go and Steve dropped back into the seat, it was his turn to blink at the other. He wasn't sure whether his lips were tingling from after image of the sensation or the faint pain from his split lip.

"Well, at least now when they call me a faggot it'll be true," Steve said, he had a habit of saying something stupid just to break the silence and he'd long since learnt that Jonathan preferred the silence unbroken.

"Go home Steve," Jonathan said without the usual bite more long suffering endearment, he pushed against Steve's shoulder.

"Goodnight Byers," Steve said, goofy smile plastered across his face, the motion re-opened the cut on his lip and then he was wincing instead.

"Goodnight Harrington," Jonathan returned, he showed Steve his own smile as he shook his head at the other.

Steve stood at the entrance to his house and watched as Jonathan's car disappeared down the quiet road, he thought that even despite the events of that day, it really was a good night.

"Business school," Jonathan scoffed, he picked at his jeans as he sat on Steve's bed. Summer was over, the summer that Jonathan didn't want to end was over.

The other was busy going back and forth, packing things into his suitcase. Nearly all the draws were pulled open and the wardrobe doors were flung wide. It almost felt like Steve was running away, but the other was just going to some snotty college to study business, Jonathan felt like throwing up at the thought. All that preppy shit was the old Steve, the other wasn't like that anymore, wouldn't fit in with that crowd anymore.

"Yeah I know, sounds fucking awful right?" Steve smirked as he folded shirts beside the other.

"Sorority girls are going to go wild for that Harrington charm," Jonathan muttered, he was aiming for humour but a little bit of his bitterness slipped in but Steve didn't seem to notice.

"Too bad for them, I'm a taken man," Steve smirked, he winked at Jonathan and the other grimaced.

"Fuck off Steve," Jonathan hissed, he batted Steve's hand away when the other ruffled his hair.

"You don't have to worry about losing me to the big city Jonny boy, I'm small town through and through," Steve assured and Jonathan rolled his eyes.

"I'm not worried about losing you," Jonathan mumbled, head ducked

away from Steve's eyes, "Nancy will still be here and I've got Will and my mom, I'm more worried about what you're losing," he continued, his teeth clattered together as the words stumbled their way out of him.

He knew that Steve had a fear of abandonment, the other hid it well but Jonathan was the king of ignoring his problems and pretending like they didn't exist, he'd pieced it together after several visits to the other's empty home and nights where Steve's fingers twisted tightly in the fabric of his shirt.

"You guys are just a phone call away and I'm only going to be one state over," Steve said, a worn pair of jeans curled over his forearm, "I'll be fine," he added with extra emphasis.

Jonathan took the statement at face value and reached into his backpack, he rummaged around for a moment before his fingers caught on the paper bag, he pulled it from the backpack and thought about the right thing to say when he handed it over before he decided to stop thinking and just do it.

"Here," Jonathan said, he held the bag out toward the other.

Steve didn't say anything as he took the paper bag from Jonathan's hand, he delved his hand in as he peeked inside. Jonathan was endlessly thankful to not have to explain himself.

"No way," Steve muttered as he stared at the cassette tape in his hand, a smile broke wide across his face, "a genuine Jonathan Byers mix tape," he said as he turned it over.

Jonathan didn't say anything, he simply sat there writhing under Steve's boundless gaze of adoration.

"What's on it?" Steve asked as he continued to appraise the tape with awe.

"You'll have to listen to it to see," Jonathan said, he stared at his feet as he curled his sock covered toes in the carpet.

Steve's fingers came under his chin and tipped it back, the other kissed him and it felt like the swipe of a feather across his lips.

"Thanks," Steve murmured against Jonathan's lips, "now you won't be far from me no matter where I go," he smiled and that had kind of been Jonathan's plan, to leave a little bit of himself with Steve.

Steve considered himself lucky as he slid his hands up under Jonathan's shirt, skin as pale as powder beneath his touch, his knees sunk further into the tattered couch as he reached higher and higher. Elbows to the weak and lumpy cushions, he dipped down to brush his lips against the other's soft and flat stomach.

He noticed how Jonathan sighed so as though to hide the stuttering giggles that flittered up his throat from the lightness of Steve's touch. Steve smiled into his feather light kisses and stroked Jonathan's sides with his fingertips as the other shifted beneath him.

The couch reeked of spilled juice and coke and the scent of cigarettes clung to it, circles were burned into the fabric where careless hands had dropped thinly rolled cigarettes, a number of things like pennies and plastic army men were caught between the cushions and Steve was pretty sure that moths had been chewing on it. Steve felt as though it juxtaposed against Jonathan nicely, a little worn and tattered but it had a lot of character and personality. Steve pressed his palms to the sharp curve of the other's hip bones.

"You're really enjoying this aren't you?" Jonathan muttered, cheeks dusky as Steve looked up at him.

Steve didn't reply, instead he curled his fingers around the waistband of Jonathan's jeans with his eyes still up on the other's face. Jonathan caught on quickly and lifted his hips, Steve pulled the jeans down low on Jonathan's thighs, close to the other's knees. He wrapped his hands around Jonathan's thighs and pressed his face into the younger's groin, he mouthed at Jonathan's growing erection through the fabric of the underwear.

Jonathan wasn't the type that moaned with abandon, his enjoyment

sounded out in breathy sighs and raspy panted breaths. His fingers slid into Steve's bronze sway of hair, he rested his palm against the top of Steve's head and they twitched there with uncertainty. He smiled against Jonathan's semi-limp dick.

He pulled on the elastic of Jonathan's underwear, he kept his tongue pressed against the head of Jonathan's penis and the other wriggled slightly beneath him. The hand upon his head grew more incessant, began to push down a little. Steve lifted his head and pulled Jonathan's underwear down. He grazed his teeth against the jut of Jonathan's hip bone and he wrapped his hand around the hardening length of Jonathan's penis, the other began to writhe beneath him.

With his tongue flat against Jonathan's alabaster skin, he sucked a love bite into Jonathan's hip, writing his adoration into the other's flesh. Steve worked Jonathan's erection, slowly he pumped his fist, palm clammy against Jonathan's hardened cock. He kissed down the other toward Jonathan's groin and replaced his hand with his mouth.

Lips pressed to the sticky leaking head, he pushed down slowly and took the hiss that expelled from Jonathan's mouth as a compliment. He went like that for a while, feeling Jonathan unfurl beneath him, the other's fingers got lost and tangled in his hair. It was definitely going to be a complete mess once they were done.

He twisted his fingers around the base and flicked his tongue out against the slit of Jonathan's erection, tasting the pre-cum. Jonathan's back arched from the ratty couch, Steve watched the way the other's Adam's apple protrude from his neck as Jonathan stretched out. Then Jonathan was coming straight down his throat and he swallowed hard.

Steve sat back on his heels and Jonathan's shins, he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, chest heaving as he caught his breath. He crawled his eyes up the other until he met Jonathan's and then it was his turn to watch the other drag their eyes over him. Jonathan's sharp eyes settled on the straining tent at his crotch, he watched as Jonathan licked his thin lips before he rose, hands on Steve's shoulders, pushing him down onto the couch. He found hunger in the other's eyes and their mouths met in a flurry.

Steve really thought that he was lucky.

"You make me want to enjoy my life again," Jonathan murmured, he kept his eyes on the stars above them, unable to bring himself to look at the other.

They were laid out on the roof of Jonathan's car as the radio played beneath them. If he were that cheesy, Jonathan might have thought the moment magical or romantic, but being who he was Jonathan just let himself enjoy the moment without putting adjectives to it.

"It sort of feels like I only started being me because of you and Nancy, it might also have something to do with all the traumatizing shit we've been through together, but I feel like I've become a better person since getting to know the two of you," Steve rambled.

It was almost like they were confessing their feelings to the stars and not each other, it made it a little easier on Jonathan, he knew that the stars didn't care. The sound of Steve's knuckles clanking against the metal drew his eyes to the other's hand where it laid palm to the sky. Jonathan took it and they continued to murmur to each other deep into the wide open night, stars might not have cared, but he knew that Steve did and that was more than enough for him.